
OVERVIEW OF ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-

Work Programme

2. We further discussed the work programme and the work we are currently undertaking. A number of Councillors from the Committee are, at the end of January 2013, undertaking visits to a selection of care homes within Darlington, who are currently contracting with the Authority to seek the views of residents, their family and friends, and staff on nutrition and hydration in those homes. The visits are announced visits and Members will be working in pairs. The results of the questionnaires will be analysed and reported back to the Task and Finish Group for consideration.
3. We are also commencing a piece of work in relation to Safeguarding Adults, both in homes and in the community, and the first meeting of the Task and Finish Review Group was held yesterday. There was a presentation from the Assistant Director, Adult Social Care at the meeting and the Group is considering how to take this work forward.
4. We will continue to keep Members briefed on the work we are undertaking.

Extra Care Housing Strategy

5. We have had the opportunity to comment on the proposals for the future of extra care housing in Darlington which is currently being consulted on. The proposals are contained within a draft Extra Care Housing Strategy document, which sets out a developing vision for the future of extra care together with the key challenges in any future model and delivery plan. We had an interesting discussion on the budgetary pressures around adult social care and the need to maintain continuity of care and independence wherever possible. An impact assessment is being undertaken with tenants on possible use of an alternative provider for the care and support delivery. We have requested that the outcome of this and the consultation exercise be reported to our meeting on 12 March 2013. We have also requested information to be included in this report in relation to the numbers involved and the cost of the various care packages available so we can better understand the pressures on the adult social care budget and what is actually provided.

Domiciliary Care

6. As Members will note from the Adult Social Care and Housing Portfolio report, the Council's current contracts for its domiciliary care are due to expire on 30 September 2013. It is pleasing to note that the current contractual agreements have worked successfully for a number of years and that partnership working with the providers has been positive, however, as part of the commissioning process, a review of the current contract did highlight two areas for improvement which will be included in the new framework specification, there is also a proposal for the current contracts to be consolidated into one and Cabinet will be making a decision on this at its meeting on 5 March 2013.

**Councillor Bryan Thistlethwaite
Chair of Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee**